THE NEBRASKA ADVERTISER

W. W. SANDERS, Publisher.

NEMAHA, - - - - - NEBRASKA.

CARE'S SLAVE.

It was the budding May-time,
The white boughs overhead;
"Oh, give to me some play-time,
Good Master Care," I said.
I saw his head begin to shake—
"Not now; just wait and see—
I'll give to you a holiday
When planting's done," said he.

It was the glowing summer;
How cool the woodland's shade!
Again an eager comer,
"Oh, give to-day!" I prayed.
Old Master Care his forehead knit;
"The grass is ripe to mow;
Work on till haying-time is past,
And then I'll let you go."

It was the glad September;
The maple leaves were red.
"Oh, Master Care! Remember,
You promised me," I said.
"And you will find," he answered me,
"I'll keep my promise true,
And you may sport when harvest's done,
With nothing else to do."

Now winter winds are blowing—
(How weak I feel and old!)
And, by the hearth, bright glowing
I shiver with the cold.
And Care sits down beside me,
And counts up, one by one,
The tasks that I have done amiss,
Or I have left undone;
While I, low muttering to myself,
Wish I had laughed and sung,
And had my share of honest joy
When I was strong and young.
—Marion Douglas, in Harper's Bazar.

SWIPES.

BY HOWARD SEGUR.

Swipes was, to use the vernacular of the day, the kid around the telegraph office in the little town of Crompton. Who his parents were—if, indeed, he ever had any—was not definitely known by the people of Crompton. No one seemed to take sufficient interest in him to look up his lineage, further than that almost any one of the villagers could tell you that he had been shipped to the town some years before with four other boys of about his own age—seven years—from the orphans' home at Boston, with the expectation of finding homes for them among the farmers of eastern Nebraska.

His four companions had only stopped with the farmers to whom they were assigned long enough to get fitted out with clothing, when they silently left for parts unknown. Rumor had it that there were missing from the various homes they had left numerous articles of clothing and jewelry, and one farmer said that he had missed $25 that he had carelessly left in his pocketbook on the kitchen table the night of the disappearance.

Swipes, whose real name—so far as he knew—was Harry Russell, did not go with the other boys, but a good many said that if he could have had his choice he would certainly have gone.

So strong was the talk in the neighborhood against the boys that Deacon Bowles, who was a hard-fisted, avaricious farmer, and who had "taken Swipes to raise," finally said:

"Yes, indeed he must go! How do I know but what he is stayin' here as a kind of a decoy, to either steal everything on the place he can lay his hands on, or murder the whole family some night in cold blood?"

As the deacon was a man of his word, Swipes was unceremoniously bounced.

Being in a strange country, the boy hardly knew what to do or where to go. Had he been in the city he would have known what to do at once. As it was, he finally concluded that he must reach Denver in some way, where he would get a "kit" and go to blacking boots or selling papers, as he had done in Boston.

As Denver was a long distance away, and the only practicable means of reaching that point was by rail, he naturally drifted to the station to inquire concerning the distance, fare and time of trains. He met the station agent as he was starting for the livery stable with an important message for Deacon Bowles, which he intended sending to the country by "special messenger."

When he saw Swipes he stopped abruptly and said: "Hello! you're the very one I'm looking for. I've a message for the deacon, and you can save me the trouble of looking up some one to deliver it."

"I ain't stayin' at his place now," said Swipes.

"Since when?"

"This mornin'; he fired me."

"Well, is that so? You won't object to make half a dollar, will you, by taking this message to him?"

"No, sir; I can take it." Saying which, Swipes took the message and walked back to the deacon's.

"Thought I told you to leave the place!" shouted the deacon, as he caught a glimpse of Swipes through the hedge, as he reached the end of a row of corn he was plowing.

"Guess they hain't no law agin a feller bringing a message to you, is they?" queried Swipes, as he handed the message through the hedge fence to the deacon.

As he read the telegram, the deacon grew livid with rage, as was his custom when things did not go as he wished them to. "No, indeed!" he exclaimed. "I'll not take the young upstart to keep through vacation to have him pester and worry the life out o' me," alluding to the contents of the message, which was from his wealthy nephew in the city, who asked the deacon to keep his son through the summer vacation. The deacon had kept him the summer before and, as a compensation for his trouble, had received a hundred dollars, which was welcome to the hard-fisted old curmudgeon.

"Well, why don't you go?" growled the deacon when, after reading the message, he saw that Swipes was still waiting.

"I want half a dollar," rejoined Swipes.

"A half a dollar! What do you want a half a dollar for?"

"For deliverin' that message; I'm special messenger," said Swipes, straightening up to his full height.

"A half dollar for walkin' from the deepo with a message, when I didn't give you that much for a month's work! I won't pay it!" and the deacon shook his fist at Swipes in a menacing manner.

"All right, ol' man; the feller that sent it will have to pay it, then," retorted Swipes, as he started off.

The deacon turned his team; gave his trousers a hitch; took off his shoe and knocked the dirt out of it by striking it against the plow beam; replaced it; took a chew of tobacco; slapped the old sorrel mare on the rump with the lines, and resumed plowing corn.

He had not gone over half way across the 40-acre field ere he regretted that he had not paid for the delivery of the message. If his nephew were compelled to pay for it, he would be notified that the deacon had refused payment, which would be the means of knocking the deacon out of the $100 which he so much coveted.

By the time he had returned to the side of the field where Swipes had given him the message he had concluded to hail the boy and pay him the 50 cents, if he could not jew him down to 25. Swipes was nearly a mile away, and the deacon could not get his attention, although he called lustily. He finally unhitched his team, and, mounting the old sorrel mare, started her toward town at her best gait. When he had overtaken Swipes the deacon said:

"I'll give you 25 cents for fetchin' out that air message, an' not another cent."

"I ain't carryin' messages three miles for 25 cents," answered Swipes, in a sarcastic tone. "An' since you're so anxious to settle, it'll take jist a dollar an' a half to square it," he added.

The agent had told Swipes that the telegraph company would allow a messenger to collect 50 cents per mile "in some cases."

The deacon foamed and raged, threatening a whipping and arrest, but to no avail. Swipes stuck to his price.

After making the boy promise that nothing would be said to his nephew about refusing payment for the delivery of the message, the deacon grudgingly paid the $1.50.

When Swipes related the circumstance to the agent it so amused him that the little fellow was immediately engaged as messenger boy, which position was vacant at the time. The salary was small, though more than enough to pay his board, and by sleeping in the office he was able to economize closely enough to clothe himself fairly well. He also had the privilege of learning telegraphy and station work.

Thus it was that, at the end of ten years, Swipes had charge of the baggage department of the station at a salary of $25 a month.

The name of "Swipes" still clung to him, though he had proven himself not only an honest young man, but a gentleman in every sense of the word. Although he worked hard and faithfully for the company, there appeared to be no show for promotion for him.

"There is no hope for me," he would say. "How can I, who have not even a name for sure, ever expect promotion, when I must compete with young men who have respectable parents and nice homes! If they want promotion, some one of their influential friends who has a 'stand-in' with the superintendent or some other official of the road, speaks a good word for them and they go right past me!"

He would not even unburden himself to his closest friend—the agent—as he had arrived at that point in a young man's life where the conviction is forced upon him that no one cares whether he lives or dies. He plodded along during the day, and attended a night school in the evening. He had mastered station work, and was capable of taking charge of and running a small station—with the exception of telegraphing; in this he appeared to be rather obtuse, although he could telegraph, after a fashion.

The only recreation he took was with his bicycle. He had become an expert on a wheel and was considered authority on anything pertaining to cycling.

Swipes still slept in the office. A section of the wainscoting partition between the baggage-room and the office had been cut out and the lower side hung on hinges, and a stationary box bunk had been made in the opening in the baggage-room, which had a drop door on the baggage-room side, so there would be a chance for a draught in the warm weather when both doors were open, and could be closed when not in use.

One night in the fall he crawled into his bunk from the baggage-room, and, as the night was rather chilly, he did not drop the door on the office side. He soon fell asleep. How long he had slept he could not say, but suddenly he found himself wide awake.

Presently he heard someone conversing in a low tone in the office, directly in front of his bunk. He recognized in one of the speakers the new night operator, who had arrived but a day or two before. The other voice was strange to him. As he listened he heard unfolded a plot that almost caused his heart to cease beating.

The new operator was a member of a gang who intended to wreck No. 16, the east-bound express train, due at Crompton at 1:20 that night. As the operator knew nothing of the bunk being in the baggage-room, and Swipes had made no noise on retiring, he supposed that he and his pal were alone. It seemed that a part of the gang had gone to a bridge which crossed a wide, deep ravine, five miles west of town, and would remove the angle bars from two rails at the west end of the bridge, and pull the rails over three or four inches and spike them, thus making a sure thing of a complete wreck of the train. During the confusion consequent upon the wreck, the wreckers would rush in and secure $300,000 which the operator had notified them was in the express run that night, and then make their escape.

Even now the miscreants were getting the rails in shape to insure the contemplated disaster. How could Swipes avert it? There were two desperate men in the office who were certainly armed. Swipes had nothing to combat them with save a pocket-knife. It would be useless to attempt to overpower them.

He quietly arose, slipped his clothing on, stepped to the window, and by the light of the moon, just disappearing under the western horizon, saw by his watch that it only lacked ten minutes of the time when No. 16 was to leave Brewster, the station west of Crompton.

His line of action was laid out in an instant. Quietly opening the baggage-room door, he rolled his bicycle outside and, taking a lantern with a red globe in one hand, he mounted, and was soon speeding westward at a tremendous rate. Faster and faster he urged his wheel. He could never pass the bridge in time to stop the train. Then, too, he would be seen by the wreckers if he attempted it, as the wagon road followed the right of way at the bridge. It was impossible to go around off the road on account of the ravines. Precious moments were flying. Swipes set his teeth together with a bull dog determination and pedaled for life.

In his strenuous efforts to get more speed out of his wheel one of the pedals broke, causing him almost to take a header. He sprang to the ground and jerked the tool bag from the wheel; as he did so the wrench fell out, struck the globe of the lantern and broke it into fragments.

"Great God!" he exclaimed, "what am I to do!"

But not a moment did he lose. Seizing a pair of pliers and a short piece of wire which fell from the tool bag, he dashed up the road like mad, leaving his wheel where it had fallen.

Far away in the distant city the train-dispatcher was slowly calling Brewster station for the report of train 16. The train had been a few minutes late all the evening, but was gaining, and he had hoped to have it reach Brewster on time. It was now just due at Brewster, and he continued to call:

"Bu., Bu., Ds., Bu., Bu—"

There was an interruption on the circuit. First a few unintelligible sputters from the instrument, then slowly was spelled out the following:

"T-r-a-i-n w-r-e-c-k-e-r-s h-a-v-e r-e-m-o-v-e-d t-w-o r-a-i-l-s a-t h-i-g-h b-r-i-d-g-e. F-o-r G-o-d-'s—s-t-o-p N-o. S-i-x—"

Then the wire came open.

The dispatcher comprehended the situation in an instant. He sprang to the key on another line and fairly made the telegraph instrument jump from the table as he called Brewster. He finally raised him and said:

"No. 16!"

"Here, go in min.," was the response.

"Hold 16; don't let her get away!"

No answer to his order.

Again he made the sounder hum as he rapidly called "Bu."

Presently he was interrupted by the operator at Brewster answering:

"Just in time to catch hind end rear coach and pull bell cord as train started."

"Thank God!" exclaimed the dispatcher.

In a very few moments orders were given to the section men to proceed to the high bridge ahead of No. 16 and thoroughly examine the bridge before allowing the train to cross. And to also examine wire No. 1, for an opening between Brewster and Crompton.

Two rails were found with angle bars removed and the spikes drawn and pulled out in such shape as would have sent the train to destruction.

After getting the track in shape and the train safely over the bridge, the trackmen proceeded to look for a break in line No. 1. As it was now daylight the line could be plainly seen.

Three miles west of Crompton the break was found. Swipes was also found at the break, with one broken arm, and his right leg broken above the knee. He had climbed a telegraph pole which was supplied with a "ground wire," cut the main wire and attached the wire he had taken from the toolbag of his bicycle to the west end of the main wire, so it would be long enough to tap against the ground wire on the pole. He could just accomplish this by hanging on to the pole at the extreme top. Then he was able to roughly spell out a message of warning by tapping the main line to the ground wire, although he had no means of knowing whether he was heard or not. Receiving a severe shock from the wires, he had lost his hold upon the pole and fallen to the ground, thereby breaking his limbs.

Swipes privately told his story to the agent after his fractured limbs had been attended to, and the superintendent of the road was sent for. On the arrival of that official the night operator was placed under arrest, and when confronted with the knowledge of his crime he turned state's evidence and furnished information which was the means of securing the arrest and subsequent conviction of the entire gang.

To-day Swipes is chief train dispatcher of that road. When asked how he came into that position, being younger than most men holding similar situations, he proudly points to a queer-shaped glass case which contains an old-fashioned high wheel, in the same condition it was when picked up near the telegraph pole to which it carried him in time to save the train from wreck. "And," he is wont to add, "in time to carry me into the chief train dispatcher's office."

A TERRIBLE BET.

Dear Little Mrs. Loveydovey Changed Her Mind.

"See by the papers," said Mrs. Loveydovey, "that some brute of a man bet his wife against a brown-stone house on the election."

"So I understand," said Mr. Loveydovey.

"Well," exclaimed his wife, indignantly, "I think such things are simply barbarous and ought to be put a stop to. The idea of a man cold-bloodedly risking his own wife for a brown-stone house. It is perfectly awful. Supposing he had lost!"

"But he didn't lose," replied Mr. Loveydovey; "he won. And he got the brown-stone house."

"Well, of course," assented the young matron, somewhat more mildly, "that is very nice. But it would have been terrible if he had lost. Still, a brown-stone house is lovely."

"So it is, my dear. But not worth the chances of losing a nice little wife."

"Oh, no; of course not," replied Mrs. Loveydovey, hastily. "But tell me, dear, how is the bet made?"

"That's simple enough," replied her husband. "Sam Singleton owns the brown-stone house opposite, doesn't he?"

"Yes."

"And I own you?"

"Yes."

"Well, I put you up against the house. If I win I keep you and get the brown-stone house. If Sam Singleton wins he keeps his house and gets you."

"Then," said Mrs. Loveydovey, wrinkling her pretty brow, "I would go with the brown-stone house, anyway?"

"Naturally," returned her husband.

"Dearie!" said Mrs. Loveydovey, after a few minutes' silence.

"What is it?" asked Mr. Loveydovey, looking up.

"Didn't," she asked, shyly, "didn't Mr. Singleton want to bet?"—N. Y. Journal.

Fable of the Bird and the Sheep.

A father and his son sat under a tree. A flock of sheep fed near by.

Suddenly a bird landed on one of the sheep and picking off some wool flew away into the tree.

"Oh! cruel bird!" cried the boy, "how I would like to shoot you!"

"Nay, nay," said the old man, earnestly. "You are unmindful of the wisdom of Providence! It is O K for the bird to sneak the wool from the sheep thus, for it thereby makes a soft lining in the nest for its young ones, and it is enabled to bring up its family in luxury. Now, do you savvy?"

So did the parent endeavor to inculcate the child with slobs of ethics.

"Oh, oh!" returned the boy. "Then the feelings of the sheep don't count?"

With these words he arose and going up to the sheep gave it a violent kick in the stomach and chased it around the field with a stick.

So did the child take the opportunity of gratifying the human desire for inflicting pain when it can be done safely.

MORAL.

Sauce for the goose is not necessarily condiment for the moose.—N. Y. World.

A Rock-Boring Shell Fish.

One of the most curious of the many remarkable forms of marine life is a species of mollusk called the razor-shell, which can excavate holes in solid rocks. This creature has no English name; its Latin name is Pholas. It is found in widely separated regions of the earth, but is mostly plentiful on the coast of the Mediterranean, where limestone abounds. It is frequently met with on the coast of Italy, where whole limestone beaches are honeycombed with their holes. It is still a disputed point among naturalists as to how this boring is effected. Some think that the mollusk secretes some acid which softens the limestone, but others think that the holes are bored by the simple mechanical process of grinding. The preponderance of opinion appears to lie with the latter view at present, yet it is said that no one has yet been able to catch the Pholas at work.—St. Louis Republic.

THIEVES AS HUMORISTS.

The Jokes They Perpetrate Are Not Always Appreciated.

Many of the light-fingered gentry are as smart with their heads as they are with their hands. A man must have a fund of natural humor and peculiar philosophy about him to pause in the midst of his ransacking operations in order to write to the one who involuntarily supplies him with merchandise.

Some time ago the house of a gentleman was broken into during the night. On the following morning evidences were not wanting that the thief had what would doubtless be called a good time. A cash-box had been rifled of its contents and a fair cargo of plate was a vanished asset. In addition three or four cigar ends were strewn upon the floor and the liquor decanters testified to considerable leakage. On the table was a penciled note, as follows:

"Nearly poisoned. If the coin ain't no better than cigars it's a poor cop."

At a well-known seashore resort a restaurant was entered by thieves during prohibited hours. They were evidently disappointed as regards cash, for the money had been removed previous to locking up for the night. They, however, helped themselves largely to the cigars. Not a smoke was left in the place. On the counter the empty boxes were ranged pyramidwise and on top was left a card bearing the inscription: "Pro bono publico."

Some years ago a gentleman of some account in the city was surprised on receiving the following note:

"Dear Sir: I have just stolen your son's overcoat and found in the pockets a loaded revolver and a card, from which I gather that your son intends to destroy himself this very evening. As your address was given on the card, it was possible to warn you in time. Your son is now sitting in F.'s restaurant. As I may be said to have earned the overcoat and the silk handkerchief it contained by the important service I have rendered you, I trust I shall be left in undisturbed possession of those articles."

Needless to state, the gentleman hurried to the restaurant and found his son, who afterwards confessed that it had been his intention to blow out his brains on the top of a tram car.—London Tit-Bits.

THE setting of a great hope is like the setting of the sun. The brightness of our life is gone, shadows of the evening fall around us, and the world seems but a broader shadow.—Longfellow.

NO MAN can climb higher than his own ambition.

GENTLE treatment. St. Jacobs Oil soothes Neuralgia and cures it. It fades away.

DON'T go with the crowd simply because it is a crowd.—Ram's Horn.

Good times. Happy state. St. Jacobs Oil cures pain right up to date.

OUR lives are the open volume the world reads.